check ups, information and counselling, as well as contraceptive services are being provided. This scheme which covered 50 districts last year, has been extended during the current year to 101 additional districts.

- In an effort to supplement existing interventions seeking to expand outreach and coverage, a series of 'Parivar Kalyan and Swasthya Melas' have been held all over the country including Mathura, Delhi, Lucknow, Kargil, Patna, Badal, Perambur, Sultanpur (UP) and Ghazipur (UP). [Many more are being planned.]

- RCH camps are also periodically organised at primary health centres for providing integrated services to the rural population, especially women and children, in remote and under-served areas. The scheme, which was started in 101 districts last year, has now been extended to 77 additional districts in the current year.

- The programme for training of traditional birth attendants (Dais), with provision of kits, has been introduced in 142 districts with a record of less than 30% safe deliveries.

- Resources and skills of the Indian Systems of Medicine are also being utilized in the RCH Program. Effective Ayurveda and Unani medicines for common ailments of women and children are being supplied to sub-centres/institutions in 7 States, in particular.

- Private-public partnership through the NGO movement has been networked in 412 districts.

There is no denying the fact that the unabated population growth has affected economy of this country; but the promotional, motivational measures and operational strategies envisaged in National Population Policy, 2000 are expected to achieve a stable population by 2045, at a level consistent with the requirements of sustainable economic growth, social development and environmental protection.

Anthrax powder infection

814. SHRI CHO S. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many areas in the country are getting affecting by the Anthrax powder infection;

(b) if so, the number of such cases identified by the Department;

(c) whether Government are aware that it is being targeted against selected VIPs and departments to spread the fear of infection; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken to prevent this menace and the reasons for this fast spreading infection through this Anthrax powder?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) and (b) Informations are being received from various parts of the country regarding receipt of envelops containing suspicious powder. National Institute for Communicable Diseases, Delhi, identified as the nodal agency for investigations of any specimen suspected for Anthrax has received 267 envelops/ packets containing suspicious powder for testing till 20th November, 2001. Testing has been completed in 258 samples but none was found positive for Anthrax.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has also widely published Do's & Don'ts in the leading National Dailies regarding Anthrax to make the general public aware of precautionary measures to be taken. CD Alert, a monthly Newsletter of National Institute of Communicable Diseases titled 'Bioterrorism-Public Health System to Remain Alert' exclusively on Anthrax has been widely circulated (September-October issue) alongwith a supplementary. It has also been put in the Website of MOHFW for information of general public (http:// mohfw.nic.in). Anthrax is used for its potential to cause mortality and morbidity. It can be easily produced in a laboratory and can survive for a very long period in an adverse condition.

Criterion for opening Central Government Dental Colleges

815. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Central Government Dental Colleges in each State/ Union Territory;

(b) whether the demand for dental colleges has increased;

(c) if so, the demand thereof, State/Union Territory-wise;

(d) the criterion fixed for establishing a new Central Dental College;

(e) whether Government propose to open new dental colleges; and